University, which was embodied in 1920 from two colleges which had been affiliated to Calcutta University, now consisted of four constituent colleges—University College, Judson College, Teachers' Training College and Medical College. Of these, the Teachers' Training College led a self-sufficient collegiate life of its own, with its normal school, its Anglo-Vernacular high school and its graduate students. Judson College which was an American missionary college contained a very large percentage of Karens and Christians. Medical College was situated a good distance away from the University estate, and in any case students did not enter its buildings until their third year. For the great majority of Burman Buddhists, therefore, the University meant University College with its strength of about 200 women and 800 men students. 873

The buildings of the college were laid out on a garden estate of the University, about four miles out of Rangoon. There were brick and wood residential halls grouped in units, great blocks of teaching buildings in a series of rectangular arms from a main block, a University Convocation Hall in the form of a massive square structure laid heavily at the head of a fine central drive, a narrower and lofty University Library building, a Union Hall, a gymnasium with bright dancing murals on its outside walls, and later a Buddhist Congregational Hall with the traditional tiered roofs in concrete. Opposite was Judson College in the same style, but with the scale greatly contracted. The whole arrangement was set out with stretches of grassy lawns, gardens, great trees and the thousand smaller trees, which had been planted when the estate was first laid, and residential houses for the staff; and bordering all were the Kokine Lakes, extensive stretches of water with pretty banks and wooded islands. The University estate could have been developed into a self-sufficient garden city for it had already a post office, a bookshop and a small hospital of its own, and a servants' village stretched out till it joined the Teachers' Training College not far away. Although the blocks of modern structures could have been built in a more Burmese style, there was enough romance in these surroundings for those of us who had come from English schools. The Convocation Hall was guarded by two giant bronze gryphons squatting on slabs of concrete, in the way that lion gryphons guard all our pagodas. The names of the residential halls were the names of ancient capitals of Burma—Prome, Tagaung, Pagan and Ava; Pegu, Thaton, Sagaing and Inya. The bus service connecting the University with Rangoon town was marked with the naga—the dragon of our mythology and a noble beneficent creature. It was the most elevated of the Rangoon Electric Tramway's attempts at symbols for the illiterate users of buses—an aeroplane for Mingaladon 873 494 212

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where the airport of Rangoon was situated, a horse's head for the suburb of Insein where wild horses used to graze before the area was cleared and built up, a prawn for the suburb of Pasundaung which name means "Mountain of Prawns" and a naga for the *Tegatho*, the Taxila of learning.

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Burmese girls and boys came to this University from the age of sixteen upwards. They studied English and Burmese and a combination of three other subjects for two years, reducible to one for more promising students, and then took an Intermediate Arts or Science examination. After this, a small percentage read an Honours Course for three years, and the great majority took a B.A. or a B.Sc. with a combination of three subjects. There were facilities for an M.A. course, a Law Degree, and an Engineering Degree in a special Engineering College endowed by the Burma Oil Company. For graduates who wished to return to cram for a competitive examination for one of the government services, there was a useful system of minor tutorship posts which, originally paying Rs. 120/- per month, had been split up into two or three posts paying Rs. 40/- to Rs. 60/- for about four to six hours of work per week. This enabled students to have an extra year or two of preparation without any support from home, because boarding fees in any of the halls amounted to Rs. 24/- only. Indeed for the richer classes of Burmese people, life at the University was one of the cheapest ways of passing years in pleasant surroundings, and only the existing rules prevented some from continuing their adolescence into their late thirties. One of my cousins who showed such promise that he matriculated at fifteen, became a rowing man with much money to spend after he joined the University and spent altogether fifteen years as an undergraduate, dodging from one college to another, alternating the arts and the sciences as a reason for his long stay. My uncle Kyaw Din, who carried off the prize of the year in his Intermediate examination, subsequently spent seven years getting his B.A. because he was the best footballer of his day.

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Although there were students here and there who were buried in books either from a love of learning or from being the only breadwinner of a family, my remembrance of University College, Rangoon, is of a great mass of boys and girls who tried to get a passable degree round examination time, but were otherwise submerged in a flood of love and dramatic entertainment. The various associations of arts and sciences, religious and racial fraternities, were more social than intellectual in their activities, but in the Union there was no lack of exciting and impassioned discussions. Here it was that Thakin Nu, Foreign Minister during the Japanese occupation, and Major-General Aung San, leader of the Burmese National Army, harangued us as junior students. Here there was such fierce heartburning about agrarian troubles, labour strikes at the

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PREFACE

000 PHONETICISM is said to be "the murderer of history," and there has been a craze of late years to prevent this felony by the adoption of "scientific methods" of rendering Burmese in English characters. I have no doubt that whatever other faults I may be accused of, I shall be greatly blamed for endeavouring to reproduce the pronunciation rather than the orthography of Burmese words. But I may be allowed to contend that the catch phrase ascribing bloodguiltiness to phoneticism, however just it may be in a country where *fonetic nuz* puzzle a long-suffering generation, is most misleading and calumnious where it is applied to a foreign language, and especially to such a language as Burmese. No one who is concerned about the etymology of a language is likely to study it except in the national character; if he trusts to transliterations, scientific or otherwise, he will most assuredly be little worth listening to. When an author writes in English about a little-known people he presumably writes for a majority of readers who know nothing whatever of the language, and cannot be reasonably expected to have any very great concern in its etymology as long as they get a more or less correct notion of how the words should be
● 212 pronounced. This is most especially the case in Burmese, where, in very many cases, the orthography of a word supplies but the remotest possible hint of its pronunciation.

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The scientific men write bhoora (lord), the Burman pronounces the word păyah; tsit-tshay (ghost) is a formidable way of reproducing the spoken tăsay; pa-nya (learning) but inadequately represents the sound of pyinya; khwon (taxes) is a startling, not to say puzzling, way of suggesting the sound kohn. The matter is made none the easier by the difficulty of finding an English equivalent at all for some Burmese sounds. In the words nyaung, pyouk, gyi, and the like, the *y* belongs to the preceding letter, and has always the consonantal and never the vowel sound. Such words are therefore invariably monosyllables. Again, the nou'pyit sound, which I have written *è* on the analogy of the French *mère*, has as a final vocable no equivalent in English. *Errant* gives the force as an initial letter. The scientific form of *eh* is certainly misleading. The initial *ky* is a great crux to beginners in Burmese. It requires a fine ear to catch the precise sound. An English officer will call for his clerk, Maung Poh Chè, and the punkah-boy will pass on the word for Maung Poh Kyè—tyè it might almost be written. But it is little use multiplying instances. Suffice it to add that a final consonant is always silent—strangled is almost a literal translation of the Burmese word.

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Of published works on Burma I have found those of Colonel Yule, Captain Forbes, and Dr. Bastian most valuable in supplying hints as to those of the national customs most likely to be interesting to foreigners. Had Captain Forbes's life been prolonged this book would probably have had no *raison d'être*.

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In conclusion, I have only to record my indebtedness to the Rev. Dr. Marks, the head of the S.P.G. in Burma. For over twenty years he has laboured in Burma both as a teacher and a missionary, and there is no Burman in the

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The name given thus[1] appears to be entirely a matter of choice; but this is not so. The consonants of the language are divided into groups which are assigned to the days of the week, Sunday having all the vowels to itself. With all respectable families it is an invariable rule that the child's name must begin with one of the letters belonging to the day on which it was born, but within these limits any name may be chosen. As an immediate consequence it follows that a Burman has a birthday every week, a frequency of recurrence which renders the event monotonous, and precludes the friendly amenities of western nations on such occasions.

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The letters of the alphabet are apportioned to the days of the week in the following rough rhyme, which every Burman child can repeat with as much certainty as the English one will display in the recitation of Little Jack Horner:—

Ka, kha, ga, gha, nga, Taninla.
Sa, hsa, za, zha, nya, Ainga.
Ta, hta, da, dha, na, Sane.
Pa, hpa, ba, bha, ma, Kya-thabadè.
La, wa, Boddahu.
Ya, ya (the Pali and Arakanese ra), Yahu.
Tha, ha, Thauk-kya.
A, Taninganwè.

That is to say, children born on Monday have for the initial letter of their names, K, Kh, G, Gh, or Ng; for example—Maung, Ngwe Khaing, Mr. Silver Sprig; Maung Gauk, Mr. Crooked; Ma Kwe Yo, Miss or Mrs. Dog's Bone; Ma Khin, Miss or Mrs. Lovable. It will be noticed that in Miss Dog's Bone's names the initial letters of the two words do not agree as to the day. This often occurs, and the first name (Maung and Ma being merely honorary additions) always denotes the birthday. The better class families avoid such a mixing, however, as far as possible.

Tuesday's children have the choice of S or S aspirated (practically the same), Z, Zh, and Ny. For example:—Maung San Nyun, Mr. Beyond Comparison; Maung Po Sin, Mr. Grandfather Elephant; Ma So, Miss or Mrs. Naughty.

[1] [Cf. category 553, p. 3 -- ANALYST]

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and ninepins, played with the big flat seeds of a jungle creeper. Pleasant they were under the shade of the great mango and pipul trees and the lofty cocoa-nut and palmyra palms, and exciting were the games, so that the customary stillness of the place was rudely broken upon by disputing voices, till a monk would come out and bring all back to work again as a penance. Then during the work there was the fun of the writing hour, when everybody had to write out maxims and prayers on his little parabaik with a clumsy pointed steatite pencil. There were always some stiff-fingered big pupils who could not manage to write their copy neatly or correctly, and as punishment had to take the good writers on their backs and march ruefully up and down the long schoolroom during pleasure. Sometimes they were thrashed, but the other punishment was the more dreaded. Then there was the schoolmaster monk, who would tell fairy stories of the other three great islands which lie in the sea round about Myinmo mountain; of the half-moon-faced western islanders, and the wondrous tree that bore everything eatable one could wish for and delivered it ready cooked; the joys of the six heavens of the Nats and the grisly horrors of Nga-yè, with its fearful ages of fantastic punishments. Every now and again travelling necromancers and hmaw sayās would spend a night or two at the monastery, and in recompense for the little delicacies and odds and ends of food which good-natured neophytes would get for them, used to tell stories of witchery and marvel. Sometimes there would be a sā-haw 'ā, a kind of cyclic poet, who knew half the zats in the language by heart, and would recite a little just for practice. Or a tattooing sayā would come round and mark some particularly favoured youth with a quaint figure. Discussion as to its meaning and probable virtues would be carried on in the shadowy evenings for months afterwards. Varieties of this kind recur to the old Burman as he thinks of the school days long ago, and he sighs with as much conviction as any European that there are no days so happy as the school days.

English rule has disturbed old customs a good deal in the province, but even now we may say that, as an invari-

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able rule, when a boy has reached the age of eight or nine years he goes as a matter of course to the Pôngyi Kyaung. It is open to all alike—to the poor fisherman's son as well as to the scion of princely blood—for no one pays anything, and it is not carefully considered who it is that fills the monkish begging pots in the daily round. Thus every Buddhist boy in the country is taught to read and write, and in this respect at least there are but very few illiterate Burmans. This primary education must by no means be confounded with entry into the monastery as a koyin-gale, or novice. Strictly speaking, this ceremony ought not to take place before the age of fifteen, and the earlier sojourn is only a preparation for it. The younger pupils may become boarders in the monastic building if they choose, but they do not assume the yellow robe, which marks them, for however short a time it may be worn, as members of the Assembly of the Perfect. They wear their ordinary clothes and retain their secular name.

As soon as the boy enters the monastery he is set down in the big schoolroom beside all the other boys, and receives a roughly-made black wooden slate. On this are written a few of the letters, perhaps the whole of the alphabet. A little explanation starts him off, and for the next few days he is engaged in shouting out their sounds at the top of his voice. Nobody minds him, for all the other scholars are similarly engaged in hallooing, and the monks derive a sense of comfort and a virtuous consciousness of doing good from the noise. It is as soothing as the sound of his mill-wheels to the miller, or the roar of traffic to the cockney. If a boy stops shouting, it is a sign that he has stopped working—and if he is not meditating mischief, it is probable that he is about to go to sleep, and he is corrected accordingly. The method is an admirable one for keeping the boys occupied—much more so than civilised Western methods—though I fear a council of English head-masters would scout the idea. The casual foreign observer who goes about taking notes, like Grose or the "Rampant M.P.," passes the ecclesiastical school, and in amazement at the seeming uproar within, declares that monastery schools are hopelessly badly conducted, and without the semblance of discipline. As a

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fully observed, in accordance with the precise instructions laid down in the Wini. When a monk wants anything he must not go and get it for himself, nor direct any one in as many words to bring it to him. He must say to an attendant shin, or scholar, "Do what is lawful," whereupon the food is brought him, and the shin kneels down at a distance of a couple of feet, and, making the customary salutation, says, "This is lawful." The yahan then either takes it from his hand or directs him to place it within reach. The same ceremony is observed in everything, whether the religious wants water to wash his face or hands or to rinse out his mouth, or his sandals and fan when he goes out, or when offerings are made to him by the pious. The desire is of course to impart dignity to all the monk does, and to repress covetousness and inordinate carnal desires, and the custom dates from the very foundation of the order.

After the noontide meal all return to work again. A certain number undertake the teaching of the boys, who are at all stages of learning, from the children at the Thin-bôn-gyi, the spelling-book, up to the Ko-yins, who, in accordance with the law, are learning the Wini, the Whole Duty of the Monk, by heart, with a view to abandoning the world and adopting the religious life. Others set to work to read old texts and the commentaries on them, or go to superintend the professional writers who are copying out manuscripts, carefully scratching on the palm-leaves with sharp steel style. The pyin-sin themselves never do anything of the kind. The writers are all professionals, laymen, and almost without exception from Upper Burma. The sādaik, the carved and gilded box containing the palm-leaf books, stands in the central room near the images, and often shaded by a sacred umbrella. When a learned sadaw makes notes, or writes a commentary of his own, he dictates it all to these copyists, who afterwards engross it. Most of the older members of the kyaung do, however, what an Englishman would call nothing, all the afternoon. They talk with whatever idlers—and there are always an abundance of them—come about the place, and then sink into meditation and many of the weaker of them into sleep. Meditation is the only path to the higher seats whereby a

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792 [293] dozen or more solemn-visaged monks sitting on their mats and coyly hiding their faces behind these big fans is apt to raise a smile on the face of a foreigner. But there is no doubt that the regulation is well advised. Women are disturbers of tranquil meditation.

792 346 561 When these necessaries have been provided, the candidate proceeds to the appointed building. This is always a thein, a consecrated hall, built of teak, with open sides and the sacred three, five, or seven overlapping and diminishing roofs, not unlike the Albert Memorial in appearance, but much larger at the base. Here the examining body is assembled to the number of ten or twelve, ordinarily, but a minimum of four will suffice if the ceremony is conducted in the jungle. The senior is appointed upyitsi, or president, and a secretary is nominated, whose duty it is to bring forward the candidate and to read the Kammawāsā, the ritual of ordination. This is the most gorgeously ornamented of all the Burmese books. It is written, not in the ordinary round character, but in square letters painted on with a thick black resinous gum, and requires a special education to read it. The leaves are formed either of the ordinary palm-leaf, thickly covered with red lacquer, and profusely ornamented round the border and between the lines with gilded figures of nats and elaborate scroll-work, or in the case of the more sacred monasteries, of the discarded waistcloths of kings. None might wear these pasos after the Great King of Righteousness had tired of them, and many were therefore made use of for this purpose. Portions of them are taken, doubled over, and then covered with numerous coatings of wood-oil and a paste composed of this same thitsi, with finely sifted burnt rice-husks, sawdust, and rice-water, until at last they become firm as a piece of cardboard, but vastly more pliant. Then the sheets are emblazoned, and the text painted on, the whole being enclosed between richly ornamented teak boards. Few more splendid-looking manuscripts can be seen anywhere. Occasionally copies are found engrossed on thin sheets of ivory or copper, but those on the royal pasos, called Wut-lè Kammawāsās, are most highly esteemed. The [195] text is always read in a peculiar way, in a high-pitched, jerky recitative, which is not without a certain impressive effect.

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792 574 531 the city walls was formerly covered with monasteries, each of them standing separate and enclosed within its own parawun, and almost all presided over by a sadaw, a monk of the highest rank. They were thus entirely independent of each other. One of the most interesting for Englishmen is the Thiho Taik, the "Ceylon Monastery," presided over by Lingayāmā, a sadaw who was in great favour with Mindôn Min, the last king but one. The term taik is always applied to a "bishop's monastery," as implying that his is the chief of a number of kyaungs, all under his care, and in which he makes occasional sojourns. The Thiho Taik is peculiar for its trim appearance. It is very new; the under part of all the buildings is of brick; the compound is kept scrupulously clean; there is not a single large tree in it, and the parawun is a neat sawn-wood fence, instead of being, as is the case almost everywhere else, composed simply of huge stems of trees placed side by side in the ground. The sadaw himself is a very enlightened man. He has been several times to Rangoon to worship at the 792 Great Pagoda, and to decide on questions in dispute. He 217 has, in his library, copies of the English Scriptures in the Burmese version of Judson, and has read them through. Numbers of American Baptists' tracts, and the sacred books of other religions, have also a place in his manuscript chests. These are all deposited in a separate building standing in the middle of the enclosure, and used for no other purpose, except that the scribes sit here making copies of borrowed MSS., or setting down notes of the learned bishop himself. ● 212 The palm-leaf book is still universal, and the work of making up a volume is therefore very laborious; for the most practised manipulator cannot, with his agate style and light strip of palmyra-leaf, exceed the speed of an English boy who has just got over the preliminary difficulties of pot-hooks and hangers. The letters scratched on the leaf are made more distinct by the application of crude earth-oil. This serves to darken the writing, as well as to preserve the book. The regular scribes are always laymen, and it is a matter of very considerable unpleasantness to the cenobites, that the cleverest of them are very often uncommonly bad livers, spending all their gains in libations of "Old Tom," or little

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Upper Burma

balls of opium. These vagaries are, however, frequently winked at, for a copyist who can write neatly and with accuracy is far from being common.

The Thiho Taik library is a model in its way. It is nearly the best monastic collection in Mandalay, and is certainly far better arranged than any other. The sadaiks, or manuscript boxes, are arranged in three rows, one over the other; the thôts and zăts—the sermons and birth-stories—of the Lord Buddha below; above them the Cinghalese commentaries and exegeses; and on the top shelf Burmese translations and the explanations of various learned sadaws. Each chest contains a large number of different books, every separate collection of leaves being enclosed between wooden boards, some plain, some carved in high relief, with figures of dêwas and demons. Round this is wrapped a kabalwè, a square piece of cloth with inwoven scenes from the sacred books, or portions of the Law, and the formulæ used at the pagoda. Most of these are of silk, very often with narrow slips of bamboo worked in so as to give stiffness to the whole. Instead of this, or sometimes in addition, is used the sā-si-gyo, a riband, about two fingers' breadth, and upwards of a yard in length. This is knitted or crocheted in a peculiarly close fashion, which puzzles English ladies. On it is worked the name of the owner, his titles and distinctions, and whatever other aspirations he chooses to add. They are very neat, and quite easy to read, an advantage which does not always characterise Berlin wool work. The king's grants of forest land, monopolies, and the like, were usually executed in this way.

All the boxes are kept carefully locked, and the door is barred at night, for such a library represents years of labour, and could only with the greatest difficulty be replaced. It is only in Mandalay that libraries of any value are to be found. In Lower Burma the majority of the kyaungs do not even possess a complete copy of the three parts of the Bitaghat, the Buddhist Bible, and some few have nothing beyond a copy of the Kammawāsā, and perhaps a Maṅla Lingaya Wuttu, a life of the Lord Buddha, or something of the kind. Many others have, no doubt, valuable collections, but the monks are ignorant, they cannot read the books

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778 articles for household use. The platform is never deserted.
788 Even long after midnight the voice of the worshipper may be heard in the night air, chanting in solemn monotone his pious aspirations, while on a duty-day, and especially on a feast-day, the laughing, joyous crowd of men and maidens, in their gay national dress, makes the platform of the Shwe Dagôn one of the finest sights in the world.

The Shwe Dagôn Payā is by far the most widely celebrated of the great Buddhist shrines, but there are others which, if not so venerated in other lands, still enjoy an even greater local reputation for sanctity, and attract pilgrims from all parts of Burma and the dependent hills, with now and again a band of pious worshippers from distant countries.
[563] Chief among these is the Shwe Hmaw-daw at Pegu, which commands Talaing worship before even the shrine of "the slanted beam" on the Theinguttara hill. The pond close by it was covered with lotus blossoms immediately on the construction of the shapely spire and the great Tha-gyā Min, and countless Byammās and Nat-dēwas assisted at the enshrinement of the relics. As with many other fanes, the king granted to the pagoda, and set apart from secular uses for ever, the whole space round it on which the shadow of the original pile fell between sunset and sunrise. Several
[793] hundred families were dedicated to its service, and in 1881 large sums were raised throughout all the low country for the manufacture of a new hti and the gilding of the whole surface, while many wondrous signs in the neighbourhood attested the sacred character of the undertaking. Similarly the Shwe San-daw at Prome, with its multitude of bells on the cramped hill-top, enjoys a special reputation on account of the prophecy there spoken by Shin Gautama himself, and the connection of the payā with the national hero-king, Dwut-tabaung, as recorded in the sacred books. In proof
778 of this there exists to the present day, and may be seen at
● 212 the foot of the hill, a huge stone with an inscription which none but the pure-minded can read, and few even of them understand. In other places examples of this duganan kye-ganan, a kind of cypher-writing, or cryptograph, as it appears to the unenfranchised, exists, and usually records in mystic phraseology and inverted orthography the alms presented to

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the pagoda. Many of the lists of donations are, however, graven in a less cramped kyauk-sa, or "stone writing," the givers having probably had a weak hankering after earthly fame. Thus a goodly marble slab with a long list of names may be seen at the Shwe Hmaw-daw, and a tablet near the Mya Thalôn, the Temple of the Emerald Bed (of the Buddha), at Ma-gwe in Upper Burma records how Min Din and Min La-go had in the year 2399 of religion covered the whole payā with yellow cloth, repaired it thoroughly, and had it painted red and gold. An exact account is given of the amount of materials used and the money paid to workmen, and the inscription ends up with a prayer that the family of the donors might be gratified with the birth of a son. Near it is a magic stone with the figure of a hare, surrounded by stars, deeply graven in it to represent the moon, and a peacock to represent the sun.

A frequent adjunct of many pagodas is the Shwe Zet-daw, the imprint of the Lord Buddha's foot. It is too nearly square to command a painter's or sculptor's praise, and the toes are all of the same length, as may be seen in the example carried off by Captain Marryat, the novelist, in the first Burmese war, and now preserved in the British Museum. The sole is divided into a hundred and eight squares (taya shi' kwet), and on them are many lekkhana, representations of monasteries, pyathats, tigers, kalawaiks, henthas, parrots, seipputi fish, and the like, to signify that all things were under the feet of the Great Master. The number of beads on the rosary corresponds with the number of squares on the Shwe Zet-daw. The most famous example is at the pagoda of that name east of Mandalay, the great resort of the Shans, and another well-known one is opposite Magwe, inland from Minbu, where the mud volcanoes are, "the boiling vats of the nagās." But there are many specimens all over the country, not a few with the figure of a nagā, or sea monster, reared over them.

Most famous among the small pagodas is the Kyaik-hti-yo, insignificant in size, but unique from its position. The hill on which it stands takes its name from the payā, and is over three thousand five hundred feet in height. On its summit are numbers of granitoid boulders, many of them

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to learn by the eye, while the Burman learns almost entirely by ear, and the language is correspondingly affected. The semi-civilised man has a gift for catching faint distinctions of sound; and a modulation hardly perceptible to the European is enough to give to the Burman an entirely new meaning to the word. Fortunately the grammar is of the easiest possible character, and there is an extensive written literature, so that recourse may be had to the system of learning by the eye; but this only produces book scholars, and without a knowledge of the pronunciation it is impossible to appreciate the smooth flow of the dramatic metres. Individual sentences, too, may be clear enough, and the immediate connection of subordinate ideas with the leading thought is a great help, but longer compositions can often only be understood by a careful collating of the whole meaning, when once reading aloud would make the whole idea perfectly evident to a Burman.

One of the principal features in the language is the arrangement of words in a sentence, which, as is the case also in Thibetan, is the exact reverse of the order followed in English. This is the more singular and significant to the philologist, because the surrounding Shans, Talaings, and Karens observe practically the same sequence as in English. Another peculiarity is in the nouns, adjectives, and tenses of verbs, which are all formed by the addition of suffixes or affixes to the verbal root. Passive verbs are in very many cases transformed into the active form by the aspiration of the initial consonant, and transitives from intransitives in the same way; as kya-thi, to fall; hkya-thi, to throw down, or cause to fall; pyet-thi, to be ruined; hpyet-thi, to bring to ruin; lut-thi, to be free; hlut-gyi, to set free. The language is written from left to right, and there are no spaces between the words, and but very few paik, or stops, to mark separate sentences, except the paik-gyi which divides paragraphs, and consists of four short perpendicular lines arranged in couples. The written characters are, all but one or two, composed of circles, or segments of circles, having acquired that shape from the original Nagari, by the custom of writing with a pointed style on palm leaves. The alphabet is derived from

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212 171 the Magadhi or Pali (the latter word properly meaning a text and not a language), and was doubtless imported into Burma with the teachings of Buddhism. The monosyllabic character of the language has, however, considerably changed 194 the sound of many of the letters. There are ten vowels and thirty-two consonants, every alternate vowel having the sound of that preceding it, but considerably longer and broader in tone. The consonants are divided into groups of gutturals, palatals, cerebrals, dentals, and labials, with five liquids, a sibilant pronounced *th*, and an aspirate. In each class there are five letters; the first the simple sound, the second its aspirate, the third the sound rough and hard, the fourth its aspirate, and the fifth the corresponding nasal. 212 The letters of the alphabet have all names descriptive of their shapes, beginning with ka-gyi and ka-gwe, "great ka" and "curved ka." Some of the names are singular; "big-bellied ta," "elephant shackles hta," "bottom indented da," "steep pa," "hump-backed ba," "bridle za," and "supine ya." The vowel *a* is inherent in every consonant, and is pronounced in every case, except when it is "killed" by the "that" mark, when the consonant itself is also killed, and the effect produced is a short, sharp, abrupt termination to the word, as if the letter were strangled in the attempt to pronounce it.

193 A peculiarity which Burmese shares with all the other cognate tongues is the use of help words in counting—"nouns generic" as they have been called. One cannot say in Burmese, as in English, "two dogs," "four spears," "three trees," and so forth. It is requisite to mention first the thing spoken of; second, the number or quantity of objects; and finally, the genus, or class to which they belong. Thus kwe hni'-gaung, dogs, two animals, or two dogs; hlan le-sin, spears, four long, straight things; ôn-bin thôn-bin, cocoanut palms, three trees, and so forth. The cardinal is not placed in immediate juxtaposition with the noun, but has the guiding word in between. There are a vast number of these generic nouns, and they come quite naturally to a Burman. He speaks of boxes and pots as so many "round things"; books and letters as "writings"; mats as "flat things"; horses and carts as "things to be ridden on";

In Standard 1A, numerals up to one hundred and the various arithmetic operations are taught. Reading is done from a primer which contains fifteen commandments of the Buddha in Pali, with Burmese translations. In addition, a more advanced reader is used, containing sermons of the Buddha in both languages. The children in this class range in age from six to thirteen years, the average being nine. 872

The next class, Standard 2, provides further reading in the sermons and precepts of Buddhism, arithmetic ranging into high numbers, multiplication tables up to sixteen, and sums involving money. The geography of Burma is introduced. The pupils average ten and a half years.

More advanced arithmetic, reading of historical tales, and more advanced geography are included in the curriculum of Standard 3, the pupils of which average in age about the same as those in Standard 2. Hygiene is begun, literally called 'lessons to insure good health.' Besides cleanliness, the children learn proper postures for sitting, sleeping, and eating. Exercises in Burmese grammar are given by mass recitation -- which is the method of teaching all subjects. Another subject is the writing of letters and social invitations.

Children ranging from ten to fourteen years are in Standard 4. They use an advanced reader containing Buddhist sermons and history. Their arithmetic includes weights and measures, land measurement, and simple interest calculations. There is more emphasis on writing of letters and essays.

The school building is simply a vacant house. The entire school group is assembled at the same time, seated on the floor. The lessons of the different standards are recited one after another. While one standard is engaged in recitation, the other pupils are expected to study, or at least remain quiet. On the religious duty days, and of course on the holidays, the school is not in session.

This school contributes to the literacy of the village, although in large measure the high literacy here and generally in Burma, as compared with India and China, is attributable to the monastic schools. In Tadagale, 357 of a total of 640 persons, eight years of age and above, on whom literacy data could be secured, were literate. This is 55%. The criterion of literacy employed was ability to read a newspaper in some language. Of the 331 men in this number, 251 were literate, or nearly 76%. Women, however, were only 31% literate. Literacy in English is rare in the village; there were but twelve persons who could read an English language newspaper, and of these, nine were men. 872 252

Tadagale's proximity to Rangoon, where several newspapers are published, gives villagers access to the press. In fact, a few vendors of the metropolitan newspapers sell them in the community. Few persons buy them, but these copies receive very wide circulation. A survey of newspaper reading, carried out among those claiming literacy indicated a frequency range from zero to daily reading of newspapers. The largest group, nearly a third, both men and women, read a paper once or twice a week, while another 20% read one twice or three times a month. 10% reported never reading papers, while 16% claimed to be daily readers. 252 204

Intergroup Relations

As indicated earlier, about 6% of the population of Tadagale consists of Indians, some of them born in Burma. The Indian inhabitants came to the village 563

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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Every man all through Burma has gone to a monastery school as a lad, has lived there with the monks, has learnt from them the elements of education and a knowledge of his faith. <It is an exception to find a Burman who cannot read and write.> Sometimes from lack of practice the art is lost in later manhood, but it has always been acquired. The education is not very deep—reading Burmese and writing; simple, very simple, arithmetic; a knowledge of the days and months, and a little geography, perhaps, and history—that is all. But of their religion they learn a great deal. They have to get by heart great portions of the sacred books, stories and teachings, and they have to learn many prayers. They have to recite them, too, as those who have lived much near monasteries know. Several times a day, at about nine o'clock at night, and again before dawn, you will hear the lads intoning clearly and loudly some of the sacred teachings. I have been awakened many a time in the early morning, before the dawn, before even the promise of the dawn in the eastern sky, by the children's voices intoning. And I have put aside my curtain and looked out from my rest-house and seen them in the dim starlight kneeling before the pagoda, the tomb of the great teacher, saying his laws. The light comes rapidly in this country: the sky reddens, the stars die quickly overhead, the first long beams of sunrise are trembling on the dewy bamboo feathers ere they have finished. It is one of the most beautiful sights imaginable to see monks and children kneeling on the bare ground, singing while the dawn comes.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

562 her; and as her surroundings change, so will she. What she was a thousand years ago I do not care, what she may be a thousand years hence I do not know; it is of what she is to-day that I have tried to know and write.

858 562 871 Children in Burma have, I think, a very good time when they are young. Parentage in Burma has never degenerated into a sort of slavery. It has never been supposed that gaiety and goodness are opposed. And so they grow up little merry naked things, sprawling in the dust of the gardens, sleeping in the sun with their arms round the village [894] dogs, very sedate, very humorous, very rarely crying. Boys and girls when they are babies grow up together, but with the schooldays comes a division. All the boys go to school at the monastery without the walls, and there learn in noisy fashion their arithmetic, letters, and other useful knowledge. But little girls have nowhere to go. They cannot go to the monasteries, these are for boys alone, and the nunneries are very scarce. For twenty monasteries there is not one nunnery. Women do not seem to care to learn to become nuns as men do to become monks. Why this is so I cannot tell, but there is no doubt of the fact. And so there are no schools for girls as there are for boys, and consequently the girls [369] are not well educated as a rule. In great towns there are, of course, regular schools for girls, generally for girls and boys together; but in the villages 562 these very seldom exist. The girls may learn from 212 their mothers how to read and write, but most of 871 them cannot do so. It is an exception in country places to find a girl who can read, as it is to find

16:Fielding Hall G-8 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

a boy who cannot. If there were more nunneries, there would be more education among the women; here is cause and effect. But there are not, so the little girls work instead. While their brothers are in the monasteries, the girls are learning to weave and herd cattle, drawing water, and collecting firewood. They begin very young at this work, but it is very light; they are never overworked, and so it does them no harm usually, but good.

The daughters of better-class people, such as merchants, and clerks, and advocates, do not, of course, work at field labour. They usually learn to read and write at home, and they weave, and many will draw water. For to draw water is to go to the well, and the well is the great meeting-place of the village. As they fill their jars they lean over the curb and talk, and it is here that is told the latest news, the latest flirtation, the little scandal of the place. Very few men or boys come for water; carrying is not their duty, and there is a proper place for flirtation. So the girls have the well almost to themselves.

Almost every girl can weave. In many houses there are looms where the girls weave their dresses and those of their parents; and many girls have stalls in the bazaar. Of this I will speak later. Other duties are the husking of rice and the making of cheroots. Of course, in richer households there will be servants to do all this; but even in them the daughter will frequently weave either for herself or her parents. Almost every girl will do something, if only to pass the time.

They have no accomplishments. They do not

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In Pathiwe the adults were all occupied with the question of how to acquire money. The children played at skipping a rope. There is also a game where two children sit facing each other and raise progressively higher and higher barriers with their feet and their hands, while a third child has to jump high enough to clear the obstraction. If he succeeds they raise it slightly higher and so on. If he fails, then it is his turn to provide the barrier with one while the other starts jumping from the lowest level. They also play the games "SAITS" and "HOP-SCOTCH" Then there is a game where about 20 children stand in a circle with faces turned inwards. There is a person left outside who runs round the circle and while running, drops a small bundle of cloth behind someone's back. If that person knows of it he picks up the bundle and chases the first child round the circle and if fleet enough has an opportunity of dealing him several hard whacks before he finds shelter in the vacant place of the person following and it is then the turn of the person with the bundle to make the rounds and drop it behind someone elses back. If a person does not realise that the bundle has been laid down behind him the first person completes another round, and then picks it up himself and chases him around the circle back to his own place.

There is another game which is known as "THE HUGE LIN-NWE SNAKE" where the children form a long line by holding each other's waist from behind. Someone then has to come pretending to sell something and the head of the line makes a purchase. When the seller demands payment he is referred by each child to the one behind him until the leader shouts that he can take the person last in the line in payment if he can catch him. The seller tries to do this while the whole line wriggles and twists in an effort to foil him.

When U Myaing was young he used to play "THE TURTLE AND THE EGGS". They first had to find a person who would play as the "turtle" and to do this they recited the Burmese alphabet starting with the letter "KA" for one person and "KHA" for the second and so on round and round the circle until the letter "A" is reached. The person on whom this letter falls has to be the "turtle". He is placed in a circle with as many stones as there are people in the game.

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21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1980) 1937 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Mon

it, carrying on trade with India and the rest of Indo-China. During this period Burmese dancing and music and poetry, as embodied in songs, perhaps assumed definite and national forms. But there was no writing. The kings that came from India probably knew writing, but their knowledge was perhaps limited; in any case, it never reached the people. The introduction of Buddhism into the country brought no writing, as it came through traders whose knowledge of religious learning was meagre. The few religious tracts preserved in monasteries were looked upon merely as curious and sacred objects. The religion, feeble from the beginning, decayed and soon disappeared. The kingdom came to an end in the first century A.D.[1]

A new kingdom was founded in Upper Burma at Pagan, which controlled the land and river trade-routes, and as a result of its commercial advantages, it became a powerful kingdom with the ascension to the throne of Anawrahta in 1044. From that point Burmese history ceases to be conjectural. Through the influence of the learned and saintly monk, Shin Arahan, Buddhism in one of its purest forms was introduced into the kingdom by Anawrahta. With it, writing was also introduced. The alphabet was the 'Square Pali', and the literature the *Three Pitakas* embodying all the religious teachings in Pali. Curiously enough, the alphabet and the literature did not come directly from India, but from Burma itself—from the Talaing kingdom of Thaton. The Talaings were a branch of the Burmese race. Many think that they were a mixture of native tribes with Indian traders. I venture to disagree. The earliest inhabitants of Burma were Indonesians, who settled on the coast of Burma during successive 'drifts' of humanity from the west, through India, to further east. Later, there was an infiltration of Mongolian tribes, who came down the rivers from the North. Inland, where the Indonesian element was weak, the new-comers dominated and later became the Burmese; along the coast where the Indonesian element was strong the tribes united and became the Talaings. However, all this is mere conjecture. The early history of the Talaing kingdom of Thaton, which Anawrahta had to destroy to obtain possession of the alphabet and the *Three Pitakas*, is not known, except that it was perhaps in existence a few centuries before Christ and was under the influence

[1] Pe Maung Tin and G. H. Luce, *The Glass Palace Chronicle*; A. Phayre, *History of Burma*. G. E. Harvey in his *History of Burma* contends that the first Burmese kingdom was Prome, and that it flourished only in about the seventh century A.D.

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Mon

of Hindu traders from South India. After the introduction of Buddhism into South India by Asoka in 261 B.C., the traders began to bring Buddhist elements to Thaton. With the establishment in the third or fourth century after Christ of the Hindu kingdoms in Java and Sumatra, Thaton became an important trading centre, and with the rise of a great Buddhist centre at Conjeveram in Madras in the fifth century, the Talaings began to receive religious writings in Pali. From that time onwards, learning was definitely established in the kingdom, and, as a result, a Talaing literature came into being. Anawrahta was interested in Pali only, and therefore when he destroyed the city, he burnt all the manuscripts except those in Pali.[1]

The writing and learning that were thus introduced into Pagan took root at once. Prose and poetry as embodied in the language of the court and in songs had been in existence long before, though unwritten, and now the new learning turned them into written forms and began to develop them. Pali was studied everywhere, and in the newly-built temples with their crowded monastic life, works in Pali on religion, on Pali grammar and prosody, and on the legal code of Manu came to be produced.[2] Translations were also made, and soon Pagan became famous throughout India for its Pali scholarship. But

[1] The Burmese language belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese group, whereas the Talaing belongs to the Mon-Khmar group. In spite of Anawrahta's conquest and in spite of the fact that racially they were cousins, the Talaings became completely merged with the Burmese only in the eighteenth century. The probability of the Sanskrit drama reaching the Talaings is considered in chap. ii.

[2] G. E. Harvey, op. cit., pp. 59, 70.

The most famous for literary activity was the *Kyaukku Ohmmin* temple. Though built perhaps even before Anawrahta, when a corrupted form of Buddhism was prevalent, it is still in an excellent condition (Harvey, p. 17).

The code of Manu was compiled originally in Sanskrit, during the period 200 B.C.–A.D. 200. Since that time it has been one of the chief sources of Hindu law (J. D. Mayne, *Hindu Law*). The Burmese received it in a Talaing-Pali version in which the sacerdotal element had been done away with. That explains why, although Manu is one of the chief sources also of Burmese Buddhist law, it has little in common with Hindu law. The existence of the code as the chief source of Talaing law (Harvey, op. cit., p. 111) raises again the question, how far were the Talaing writings under the influence of Sanskrit and its literature? We shall never know. When Anawrahta destroyed Talaing institutions and historical and literary works, he intended that all knowledge of the past greatness of the Talaings should pass into oblivion so as to smooth his way towards unifying Burma into one single State.

Pali has been, since 1044, the classical language of Burma.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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23. MARBLES (GON-HNYIN).

long wooden slate blackened with soot and rice-water (*thimbôn*). The Burmese word-building is exceedingly regular and in the main phonetic (See appendix B). Reading is acquired in one term, without much effort on the part of pupil or teacher. The Burmans have a pure decimal notation in which the bugbears *eleven* and *twelve* are unrepresented. The Burmese *eleven* is literally "onety-one." Children can count up to hundreds before they come to school and can reckon up sums mentally. In arithmetic they are taught the multiplication-table and a few rules of thumb (*bedin*). In addition to the five Buddhist commandments (p. 16) and the objects of contemplation (p. 43), which the children learn in their homes, they chant passages from the Pâli scriptures in the school chorus and get other precepts by rote: such as the category of duties to parents, teachers and elders, *viz.*, reverence, support, mutual affection (*parhik*). They are taught the value of learning as an inalienable possession, together with many precepts from the *Lawkantti* and *Mingala-thôt*; the conquests of the inner and outer worlds *Atwin-aungdyin*, *Apyin-aungdyin*, the story of the Buddha (see *The Light of Asia*) and the legendary cosmogony.

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As the result of this Buddhist system of schools, nearly half of the male and about 3 per cent. of the female population can read and write, as compared with 9 and 0·3 per cent. for men and women respectively in Bengal. The

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24. RACING TOY BOATS.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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25. GAME OF SITOPPYIT.

Burman average stands midway between those of Ireland and Austria on the one hand, and Italy and Spain on the other. (Report of the Census of 1891.)

The boys at the monastery-school (*kyaung-tha*) do the domestic work—sweep the floors and enclosures, attend upon the recluses, and help in collecting the daily food. Some scholars live at the *kyaung*, others have the morning meal there, others again have their meals at home. The recluse exacts no deference from his scholar, but nevertheless receives from all lay persons a spontaneous homage identical with that accorded to royal personages. In the *kyaung* the lads acquire the good breeding of their country, for it is among the recluses that the élite of the race is to be sought. In the stage next to be described, the lad completes this training, by himself sharing in the deference paid to the yellow robe, which he assumes for a season as novice. The monastery-schools are open all the year, but have a large attendance only in the rainy season or *wa*.

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Besides the monastic public schools there are private schools kept by laymen and occasionally also by women, in which girls as well as boys are taught. The subjects and methods are the same, but more time is given to arithmetic. The rules of thumb of the Indian *bodin* are being superseded by modern arithmetic, by help of the vernacular manual prepared by the missionary Stilson. A small fee is paid the lay teacher in money or in kind. Out of hours, the lay-school pupils are of use at their homes, minding their little brothers and sisters.

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26. CYCLE RACE.

The training begun in youth is never broken off. Study is a chief occupation of middle and advanced age. The teacher—*sayd*—clerical or lay, is reverenced,

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25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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44. ANCIENT THEIN AT PAGAN.

[212] bership of the Assembly, illuminated with lacquer on copper or ivory leaves, is read by turns by the five members of the conclave assembled for the reception of the new member. This solemnity is undertaken in the *thein*, a *wut* set apart for the *Thingâ* alone. No lay persons enter the precincts, but they may be spectators from a distance. The new *yahán* is called *Upazin*, sojourner recluse, or assistant to the *Uppize*, or *Phúdyí*, *Kindyí* (incumbent) of the monastery. In [162] 1891 there were 13,613 *phúdyí*, 6,668 sojourner *yahán*, and 13,500 probationers in the monasteries of Burma, which numbered 15,371, in a Buddhist population of about seven millions.

346 The dedication of the site for building such a *thein* (Pâli *sima*) is preceded
796 by the solemnity of *thein-thaukkt*. Ground so dedicated can never be alienated
778 to any other use. In this respect the *thein* is more sacred than the temples in general. After the site has been levelled, it is surrounded with a trench, into which water is led. In the centre a small well is sunk (*ah-dwin*). The *yahán*, not less than twenty-four in number, assemble on the spot, over which a gay pavilion (*mandat*) has been erected, and wait for the water from the trench to [792] percolate to the well. When this occurs, the site is said to have "taken" (*aung*). Otherwise it must be rejected. The *yahán* gather round the well and intone scriptural passages from a

45. YAHAN ASSEMBLED FOR DEDICATION OF THEIN.

not by age, but by the number of lenten seasons they have belonged to the Assembly. Vigils and restriction of night rest are not practised. The rule of life of the *yahán* is laid down in the *Wini* (*Vinaya Pitaka*), one of the three divisions ("baskets") of the Buddhist scriptures. A *kambawd*, or breviary of scripture, relating to mem-

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

267. BURMAN CARPENTERS.

arbour of tracery, which entirely encloses them. Ivory hafts and scabbards of daggers and sabres are ornamented in the same way. The ivory carving is not polished.

The conventional flat design, painting and embroidery exhibit affinities to the Indian decoration of the ancient temples (Nos. 94, 272). The anachronisms and other naiveties of our mediæval designers are paralleled in modern Burma; witness the introduction of British officers with their field-glasses in the design of the Prince of Pagán destroying the monster at Hngep-pyittaung (No. 224). The medium used for painting is a coarse tempera. From the labels attached to European goods, many of which are excellent in design and colour, lessons in colouring and perspective have been learned. From photographs, ideas of accuracy have been gathered, and from illustrated newspapers, ideas of composition. Neither carver nor designer ever uses a model. The painter of No. 433 confessed that he had not seen the place himself; he had it described to him. In pure design without colour, the *shwezawd* work is the best. It is a kind of drawing in lacquer, which appears black on a gold ground (No. 96). Of late the Burmans have attempted cuts on type-metal for illustrations of books (No. 276). They are executed with chisel and punch; the graver is unknown.

268. BURMAN TURNER.

Ancient inscriptions are rare in Burma, although the *thamding*, or depository for slabs recording the circumstances of religious foundations, is a recognised institution. In many of the *thamding* at Pagán may be seen the ancient *Pâli* square character, of which the Burmese round character is a development. The square character is preserved in the *kambawd* (No. 46). The late King Mindôn Min caused the whole of the Pâli text of the Tripitaka to be

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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[322]

268. BURMAN WOOD-CARVER.

engraved on 729 marble slabs, 4 feet by 3 feet. These, set under as many stucco canopies, are known as the *Kûthodaw* or *Law-kama-yazin* — the royal work of merit (No. 385). They constitute the most important of the King's religious foundations. A number of years were spent by a committee of learned *yahán* in editing the text. Certain portions have since been transferred to type, and in time the whole of this text will be available in print. The development of the round Burmese character out of the square Pâli was favoured by the nature of the material used for writing on—the leaf of the *pe* palm. The fan-leaf is split into its segments, which are piled, and dried under pressure. Then they are trimmed even, and punched with holes to file them by. The leaf is ruled with turmeric, and the writing is done with a sharp steel style, which scratches through the hard epidermis to the spongy layer underneath; both sides are written on. The transverse strokes tear the fibre more, and leave a plainer mark, which leads to a minimising of longitudinal strokes. When the writing is complete, the wooden covers are lacquered, the edges of the leaves gilt, and their faces oiled with crude brown petroleum, which both preserves the material and brings out the writing. The oiling is repeated from time to time. The leaves become dark and friable in fifty years, and the writing hard to decipher. Manuscripts over two hundred years old are scarce. Copyists are paid one rupee per *inga* of ten leaves, the work of a day or two, according to their expertness. Until rag-paper began to be imported, the paper in use was

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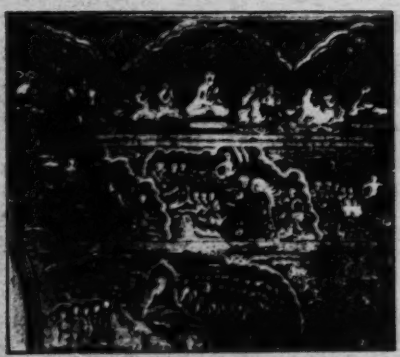
270. CARVED SCENE FROM ZAT.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

that made from the inner bark-layer of the *sekku-bin*, the same that the umbrellas are covered with (*yo-sekku*). The tree is common in the mountains 212

271. BURMAN PAINTER AT WORK.



272. MURAL DECORATION IN AN ANCIENT THEIN.

273. CARVED ELEPHANT-TUSK.

[531]

on the eastern border. The bast is frayed out in water and the pulp spread on muslin trays to dry. It is soft and strong, but uneven. It was used for writing on, in its natural cream colour, with a reed pen and Chinese ink, and

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
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212 still is used by the Shans for their sacred MSS. The Burmans use the paper chiefly in the form of stiff tablets (*parabèik*), blackened, like the *thimbón*, for writing on with a steatite pencil. Burmese type was cut (No. 452) and the first printing-plant set up in Burma by the American Baptist Mission. At present

213 538 177 [212] 214

274. PALM-LEAF MS.

871 198 203 there are a number of printing establishments owned by Burmans, from which quite a literature of their religious works has issued. At first the Buddhists of Burma considered print not good enough for the scripture canon. Modernised legends of the Buddha in his previous incarnations (*zat*) are beginning to form the foundation of a romance-literature of indigenous type. Newspapers have not yet taken a firm hold, even in the large towns; but news travels very fast in the ordinary way, especially news about the prices of goods. This western art has not contributed to the spread of western knowledge in the way that might be expected. The Yaw Mindyi, a minister of the late King Mindôn Min, made a most praiseworthy effort to popularise western ideas in a series of MS. treatises. A native undertaking upon a grand scale—nothing less than a Burmese encyclopædia—was on foot in the sixties, but fell through for want of organised support. In Japan, an analogous enterprise was successful. What applies to concerted action in matters like the above, applies equally to political combination. Few Burmans, even after years of schooling, learn enough to read an English newspaper with profit. To this day there is no Burmese manual for the study of English. The scholars learn only enough of the language to procure them employment as accountants and copyists. Similarly, there are few English who can understand a Burmese newspaper.

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275. COPYIST AT WORK.

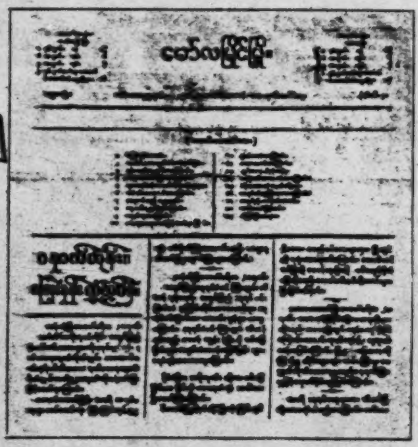
000 Dealers, with the exception of the

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

APPENDIX B.

STRUCTURE OF THE BURMESE LANGUAGE—MODE OF TRANSLITERATION.

THE Burmese alphabet is a model of classification. The vowels and consonants form separate orders, with sub-orders. The force of each letter is conveyed in its name. The name consists of two parts, the generic and the specific. The latter describes the form of the letter by its resemblance to some familiar object; for instance *ka-sinda*—elephant-fetter *ka* (ဃ). Sentences are punctuated, but the words are written—from left to right—without separation. The horizontal line of characters consists mainly of the consonants, the characters added above and below the line denote the vowels. The Burmese is all Burmese just as German is all German. The meaning of a compound word is as obvious as the meaning of *durch-sichtig* is in German and *trans-parens* is in Latin. A new root which one has learned in its function of substantive may be used as verb and adjective upon one unvarying model. The forms of speech have tended to preserve related ideas in the same categories as the terms expressing the ideas. The Burman has no equivalents for our "herb, shrub, tree." He speaks of "grain-plants, creeper-plants, timber-plants." The root idea is conveyed by a monosyllable. The disuse of mute consonants in the spoken language greatly reduces the number of available combinations of sounds by which to differentiate monosyllables. A tonic system of vowels and the aspiration of labial and dental as well as of liquid consonants, help to multiply the possible combinations. Context comes to the aid of these subtle distinctions. Prefixes and suffixes of universal application indicate the parts of speech in their syntax and their inflexions. The numeral affixes proper to various classes of objects are of a curious prolixity. Just as we say *pair*, *couple*, *brace*, so one of twenty or more different affixes has to be employed with the number, according to the nature of the object. Secondary meanings are obtained by a free compounding of words. The language possesses terms for ideas of much subtlety and complexity; but metaphysical terms are imported from the Pâli, the language of Buddhist philosophy. The pronunciation of the Pâli is adapted to that of the Burmese. Thus *Samanera* becomes *Chinthamañ*. Sanskrit, which is studied by few, presents still greater difficulties to the Burman. The word for Sanskrit is corrupted into *Thinthakyèt*. The terseness of the language appears in its proverbs. For



462. BURMESE LETTERPRESS (NEWSPAPER, p. 284).